

REPLY TO OFFICE ACTION DATED SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

SERIAL NO: 09/834,325
DOCKET NO: 199-0044US

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 were pending. Claims 16-23 have been cancelled as drawn to a non-elected invention(s). New claims 26-33 have been added.

Election/Restriction

The Examiner previously asserted that the claims in the current application are directed to three distinct inventions: Claims 1-15, 24-25 to Group I; Claims 16-18, 20-23 to Group II and Claims 19 to Group III. Applicants previously elected, with traverse, to prosecute the Group I claims, i.e., claims 1-15 and 24-25. In the September 30, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner made his restriction requirement final. Therefore please cancel claims 16-18 and 20-23 (the Group II claims) and claim 19 (the Group III claim) without prejudice.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has noted that an Information Disclosure Statement filed January 9, 2003 has been considered. The Examiner has also noted that an Information Disclosure Statement filed June 29, 2002 [sic: 2001] has not been considered for failure to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(1), which requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted. The copy of the June 29, 2001 IDS maintained in the undersigned attorney's file includes the required listing on PTO form 1449. This IDS is therefore resubmitted for the Examiner's consideration. Because this IDS was originally submitted prior to the mailing of a first office action on the merits, it is believed that no fee is due. See 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(f). However, should any fee be due, please charge the fee to Deposit Account 501922, referencing docket no. 199-0044US.

Additionally, Applicants' attorney notes that the Examiner has not indicated his consideration of a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 15, 2003. Therefore this IDS, for which the fee has already been paid, is also resubmitted for the Examiner's consideration.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the references cited in the above referenced Information Disclosure Statements and so indicate by returning initialed copies of the PTO-1449 forms to Applicants' undersigned attorney.

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The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-11, 15 and 24-25 under § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent 5,802,281 to Clapp et al. and U.S. Patent 5,844,599 to Hildin. Claims 1 and 24 are independent claims; all of the remaining claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of these claims. Because it is believed that independent claims 1 and 24 are allowable over the cited art, it is not necessary to address the rejections of the dependent claims. Therefore, the following remarks focus on independent claims 1 and 24.

It is the Examiner's burden to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. MPEP § 2142. One criteria necessary to the establishment of a prima facie case of obviousness is that the prior art references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *Id.* Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Clapp and Hildin proposed by the Examiner fails to teach or suggest each limitation of claims 1 and 24. Thus, Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims is therefore requested.

Claim 1 is directed to a video conferencing system that includes, among other things, a *"docking station adapter configured to removably couple to a docking station"* that connects the main unit in a communicating relationship with a video conferencing network." Claim 24 includes a substantially identical limitation. In contrast, Clapp is drawn to a typical prior art video conferencing system. Clapp lacks any teaching or suggestion of the required docking station adapter configured to removably couple to a docking station.

Examiner suggests that Communication Channel Interface Panel 170 in Fig. 5 of Clapp is the required docking station. Even if this were the case, which Applicants do not concede, there is no suggestion of a removable coupling between the Communication Interface Panel 170 and the remainder of the video conferencing system. Furthermore, Communication Interface Panel 170 is included within the same peripheral housing 115 as the remainder of the video conferencing system, which presumably is what the Examiner considers to be the required main unit. This is inconsistent with the concept of a docking station as the term is used throughout Applicants' specification and claims.

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Hildin does not supply the limitations missing from Clapp. Examiner only proposes Hildin for the voice-following aspects of the camera system. Hildin contains no teaching or suggestion of a modular video conferencing system that includes the required docking station adapter configured to removably couple to a docking station. Because neither Clapp nor Hildin, nor the references in combination teach each element of claim 1, Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. Rejection of claims 1 and under § 103(a) is therefore improper. Allowance of these claims and all the claims depending therefrom is requested.

New Claims

Applicants have added new claims 26-33, with claim 26 as the only independent claim. Support for these claims can be found throughout the specification, for example, support for claim 26 can be found at pages 15-20 and the figures referenced therein. It is noted that claim 26 includes a limitation requiring a "docking station comprising: a first adapter configured to removably electrically and mechanically connect to the main unit." As noted above, the cited references fail to teach or suggest a docking station having a removable connection to the main unit. Therefore claims 26-33 are allowable for at least the reasons outlined above. Allowance of these claims is therefore requested.

Change of Docket Number

The Examiner is requested to change the docket number of this file in the Office's records to 199-0044US.

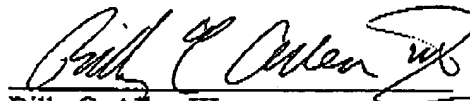
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CONCLUSIONS

Reconsideration of the restriction requirement in light of the above remarks and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested. If, after considering this reply, the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be beneficial towards advancing this case to allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the number listed.

12/11/2003
Date



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